

CLAIMS AMENDMENTS

The following is a detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application. A status identifier is provided for every claim and the current text of every claim is presented, unless the claim has been cancelled or withdrawn.

1. (Previously Amended) A computerized customer acquisition method comprising the steps of:

selecting a customer account record from an electronic customer account database of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;

determining if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity;

sending a billing statement from the first entity to said individual;

providing with the billing statement an offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an amount due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;

receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and

acquiring the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a portion of said amount to the first entity by the second entity.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining whether said individual satisfies predefined criteria for receiving said offer.
3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said predefined criteria includes geographic conditions.
4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said predefined criteria includes demographic conditions.
5. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein said predefined criteria includes financial conditions.
6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said customer account record further indicates an amount due and said method further comprises the step of determining whether said amount due satisfies predefined criteria for receiving said acquisition offer.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein said amount due is less than or equal to a maximum amount specified by said second entity.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said individual must agree to remain a customer of said second entity for a predefined minimum period of time.

9. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said billing statement is a billing statement of said first entity and said offer is provided to said individual in said billing statement of said first entity.

10 (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining if said customer has accepted said offer.

11. (Previously Amended) A customer acquisition system comprising:
- a memory for storing a customer account record of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;
 - a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:
 - select a customer account record;
 - determine if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity;
 - generate a billing statement from the first entity for said individual;
 - and
 - provide with the billing statement an offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an account due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;
 - receive acceptance of said offer from said individual; and
 - acquire the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a portion of said amount to the first entity by the second entity.

12. (Previously Amended) A computerized customer acquisition system comprising:

means for selecting a customer account record from an electronic customer account database of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;

means for determining if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity;

means for sending a billing statement from the first entity to said individual;

means for providing with the billing statement an offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an amount due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity;

means for receiving acceptance of said offer from said individual; and

means for acquiring the individual as a customer by transferring said at least a portion of said amount to the first entity by the second entity.

13. (Previously Amended) An article of manufacture comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to select a customer account record of a first entity, said customer account record including a customer identifier;

a step to determine if an individual indicated by said customer identifier is a customer of a second entity;

a step to generate a billing statement from the first entity for said individual; and

a step to provide with the billing statement an offer to said individual to pay at least a portion of an amount due on said billing statement if said individual becomes a customer of said second entity.

Claims **22 – 26** and **28 – 30** (Cancelled)